

I had the great opportunity to work at the IHS Albuquerque area office the summer of 2005. The main project that I worked on was developing a building inventory of the federally owned facilities. This was a great project because it not only let me learn about the different building systems that the clinics and hospitals use to meet their needs, but it also allowed me to visit most of the state. In addition, I worked on a lighting project and attended a seminar hosted by the local power company. Another project I worked on involved the purchase and installation of a new teleradiology system at the ACL Indian Hospital in San Fidel, NM. I found the teleradiology project interesting because I got to learn about technology and purchasing/contracting procedures. Finally, the office had recently completed a historical properties survey and was developing a management plan for those buildings. I enjoyed working on this because I could see how the management of historic buildings varies from their contemporary counterparts.

The summer was also an amazing opportunity to learn about the Public Health Service in general. I participated in a national emergency management exercise in which we moved to an alternate location and practiced the procedures that would allow the area office to maintain normal operations for at least 30 days. It was interesting to think about all the necessary components of operation and how to provide backups. I was also able to talk to officers about their deployments for emergency/disaster relief and get my basic life support for healthcare providers' certification (certification is a Commissioned Corps Readiness Force requirement).

Outside of the office, I also got to visit some of the Pueblos and learn about the different cultures. The feast at the Santo Domingo Pueblo was definitely one of the best highlights of my summer. The area also offers a lot of recreation, from river rafting to various trails to the Sandia tram. I especially enjoyed the Land of Enchantment's different mountains and geological formations—it was quite different from the flat cornfields of Illinois.

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Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument



View from the Sandia mountains